

Opinion

Disappointed That Educator Would Criticize Clemmer

To the Editor:

I am disappointed that an educator and city leader would criticize Rob Clemmer, the Carver High School principal. Signs of oppressive behaviors directed toward many groups are increasing and are evident in schools as mirrors as society.

port from the community. His response to the recent incident was exemplary and warrants similar community support. Walter Marshall acknowledged his support at the Feb. 18 school board meeting. I urge the parents and citizens of the Carver district to join us in supporting the efforts of Clemmer and the Carver faculty.

without subpoena powers. It is important that we put pressure on our elected representatives to push for enforcement powers for the proposed police review board.

Carolyn Gordon
Winston-Salem

residues in breast milk, birth defects, kidney disease, gout, early onset of puberty due to hormone additives and sterility in males due to pesticide concentrations.

Meat products affect our environment. Forests and rain forests are cleared to provide rangeland or food for cattle. Habitat for diverse species is lost. The Sahara Desert was caused by livestock overgrazing. Statistics show a meat-based diet requires 20 times more land and 100 times more water than a vegetable-based diet. Half the total land area of the U.S. is devoted directly or indirectly to livestock agriculture, resulting in ground water depletion and topsoil erosion. Crime may be related to our food, since the violence required to harvest it may be transmitted in it.

Results of this suggestion are that life spans and social security expenses would increase, while crime, teen-age pregnancy, environmental damage and health care needs would decrease.

Meat is the Root of All Evil

To the Editor:

How to get low cigarette taxes, better health care, and protect the health of people and the environment?

The concept is simple: eliminate billions of dollars in meat production subsidies and create a special sales tax on meat products, apparently the cause of many health care needs in this country. Americans consume about 1,000 pounds of meat and dairy products each a year. Considering the 300 million legal and illegal residents in the

(Sources: Statistical Abstracts of the U.S. 1992; Diet for a New America by John Robbins; Reversing Heart Disease by Dr. Dean Ornish; literature from the Mecklenburg Vegetarian Society.)

If this makes sense to you, contact your representatives.

Tommy Harmon
Charlotte

Reba J. Smith, president
Forsyth Association
of Classroom Teachers
Winston-Salem

Police Review Good Idea

To the Editor:

This letter comes to applaud Mayor Wood and the Winston-Salem Board of Aldermen for moving to establish a Police Review Board. I agree that people are justified in feeling threatened by police and need the protection of a review

CHRONICLE MAILBAG Our Readers Speak Out

board that would be able to investigate charges of police brutality and misconduct. Citizens need an objective panel to investigate police indiscretions without fear and retribution. It would also be ideal if the review board included at least 20 percent police officers. However, I do have strong reservations as to how effective this board would be

U.S., a special meat products tax would generate large revenues, perhaps 50 billion dollars a year — enough money for universal health care.

Meat products affect our health. They may be responsible for or related to 97 percent of coronary occlusions, 90 percent of heart disease, 50 percent of cancers, diabetes, multiple sclerosis, pesticide

The leadership of the teachers, principals and assistant principals recently agreed to pursue funding for training in the areas of cultural diversity and violence aversion. The Forsyth Association of Classroom Teachers, the PTA and the Junior League made formal budget requests to the school board in February, which included cultural sensitivity training as a focal area for staff development. Moreover, the Forsyth Association of Classroom Teachers sent its president to a prejudice reduction workshop recently to become trained in countering oppressive behaviors.

The most effective efforts to end racism begin in the home. The best efforts in the school as a socialization agent for each child must reflect racially balanced classes, equal access to programs, advocacy programs (much like the one at Carver, "It's My Call"), fair-but-firm discipline, and early intervention programs. The Strategic Direction Initiative, currently being developed by the school system, must culminate in a blueprint for K-12 success for all students.

In a recent newspaper article, Rob Clemmer committed his personal resources to provide drug-testing for Carver students if no other resources were available. His commitment generated immediate sup-

Academically Gifted and Permanently Expelled

The public education system is, in my opinion a system designed to educate, but in the process has become more obligated to those of above-average intellect, leaving others — mainly black males — behind to fail.

I, being a black senior brought up in these so-called advanced classes, can attest to this. "I started out in the academically gifted program. This, I feel, is a crock. Students are selected in the second grade because they are supposedly advanced in their thinking, but from what I've seen, it really has nothing to do with this. At this young age, kids only know what their parents are teaching them. Consequently, those selected come from middle-class, two-parent homes wherein their parents have extra time to work with their kids or can afford a tutor. So here at a young age, students are separated. In some of my AG classes, there were as little as three

black students. When I entered, my grades dropped.

I now realize that it wasn't because of the difficulty of the work, but because I couldn't relate. I couldn't understand why I was different. Many of my friends, mostly black, were just as smart as me. I know they were. I was singled out because I never caused problems, came from a good family, and in their (school officials) opinion, came from a family that was financially stable. This is the criteria that made me "gifted." I dropped out of the program in the fifth grade. My whole attitude changed and instantly my grades went up. Straight A's! I would have rather stayed in regular classes with my friends, but when I reached the sixth grade I was put in advanced classes. Again, it was mostly white.

I was accepted because to them I was smart and basically non-aggressive. I didn't even like to talk

They thought of me as just one of them, when I knew I wasn't. I really didn't want to have anything to do

seated next to regular students.

When one of the AG students got in trouble, they were just

GUEST COLUMN

By J OWENS



with them. I didn't like their 'We're-better-than-anyone-else' attitude. The situation is not helped by other black AG students who also feel they are superior.

The AG students wouldn't come out and say it, but feeling superior is how they felt. They would say it's always "them" acting up, referring to the other black students. AG students didn't like to attend assemblies because they didn't want to be

slapped on the hand and sent back to class. Whereas other blacks in regular classes were labeled trouble-makers and were suspended or put in CDC (in-school suspension).

I fault not only these students for their wrong opinions of us black youths, but the system that separated and taught them that they were superior.

(The writer is a senior at LIFT Academy.)

Four-To-One Odds? Who Dropped the Ball?

Four to one. These are not odds you bet against.

But what if you are a young African-American? Four out of every five students recommended for expulsion from Winston-Salem/Forsyth County schools are African-Americans. Why? Who dropped the ball? The students, the teachers and faculty, the parents or the community? Each person or group is a variable in this sad equation. Today, more young blacks are raised in a home with only one parent. That parent is faced with the responsibility of being both mother and father — the bread winner and the Argus. Without the guidance of two role models at home, some of these children are lost. The only place these students can turn to for guidance is their teachers at school.

Many teachers do not have the time or do not want to spend the time to steer their students in the right direction. Each day, teachers work with an average of 225 students in less than a five-hour period of time. Teachers barely have time to teach their students the curriculum, much less (deal with) students who cause distractions. This

prompts most teachers to send to the office both black and white students who create disciplinary problems. The problem arises when a student's disciplinary file grows thicker and thicker, and the school administration feels there is no other route than expulsion.

When students go home to an empty house after school with no one to show them right from wrong, they have no respect for the punishment they receive at school. Although this is a problem that affects both races, it seems as if the African-American race is the one that gets constantly slapped in the face with it.

It is our duty as students, parents, teachers and a community to alleviate this problem.

Students, do you feel as if you cannot get respect from anyone and that you do not care if you get expelled from school? How can you get respect from anyone without self-respect or without an education? Do not drop the ball! Parents — whether single, divorced or married — must take the time to teach their children right from wrong. They need to set the example.

Encourage, nurture and discipline. Young African Americans must unfairly prove themselves over and

American children — safe places where they can stay. Places where young blacks can see positive role



GUEST COLUMN

By JOHN HARRISON

over again to reach the heights that caucasians can attain much more easily. Do not drop the ball.

Teachers and faculty cannot give up so easily on "troubled" students. Instead of recommending expulsion for the students that are constantly disruptive, take time to put yourself in the students' shoes. Try to find out the reason for a student's actions instead of putting them in an even deeper pit than they already are desperately trying to crawl out of. Teachers and faculty, you must encourage, nurture and discipline. Do not drop the ball.

Members of our great community, we must unite and give our children — and especially African-

models. It is our duty as a community to prove to our youths that they can reach their goals. We need to give young African Americans a place where they can see the importance of an education. We cannot drop the ball.

So who dropped the ball? We all dropped the ball. Four to one odds. I would not take that bet. It is now our duty to even the margin through positive reinforcement and education, until expulsion is a worry that exists no longer. We need to pickup the ball and run with it.

(The writer is a senior at Carver High School.)

Winston-Salem Chronicle

The Twin City's Award-Winning Weekly

Established in 1974

Ernest H. Pitt • Ndubisi Egemonye

Editor/Publisher

Co-Founder

Member in good standing with:



"In Our Schools"

This week, on several of our news pages, the *Chronicle* looks at the expulsion rate of blacks from our school system here. In this "In Our Schools" special report, the *Chronicle* talked with administrators, sociologists, teachers and, most importantly, students. We did this not to place blame on any one individual or any one ethnic group, but to bring this issue of concern to the forefront of people's minds so that the process can begin in finding a remedy. A solution is never found if a problem is never discussed. For this or any other social ill to be ignored with the hope that it will eradicate itself, is a mistake. And a mistake that Winston-Salem — or the country, for that matter — cannot afford to make.

There are people in this community — white and black — who have the foresight to recognize that a problem exists in our schools in terms of the black male suspension rate. They also have the wherewithal to understand that if the trend continues, a generation of black men will have been lost. They understand the ramifications of this.

On the other, there are those who might be too blind to see where the issue of a disproportionate number of black students expelled or suspended from our schools needs addressing. Ignore it and it'll go away, they say. There's a trial going on in Los Angeles right now that emphatically states that the problem will not go away. But, in fact, will fester and fester, much like an open wound left untreated.

We all should understand the ramifications of that.

Fighting For Tenure

When Richard Davis, an associate professor of sociology at Winston-Salem State, was denied tenure, the UNC Board of Governors ruled that it was done unfairly. The board also excluded from the subsequent vote on Davis' application three school administrators who demonstrated "personal malice" toward Davis during the process. The Board of Trustees were wrong to have placed the issue back into the hands of WSSU. Having three administrators to taint the process with "personal malice" and having a non-favorable recommendation following a favorable vote should have been just cause to remove WSSU from the decision-making process.



Richard Davis

Tenure, a lifetime faculty appointment, should not be granted lightly — or unjustly denied — at any university. Lorenzo Battle III, chairman of the Department of Arts and Sciences, first recommended denial of tenure to Davis. Battle — either mistakenly or wantonly — made his recommendation without bringing the matter before the senior faculty of the department.

He made this recommendation although Davis is a well-published scholar and had a glowing evaluation. Although there were concerns about Davis' interaction with students — some students accused him of using an unfair grading system and being "military" — he nonetheless deserves just treatment. It is clear that he did not receive it from Winston-Salem State. It is also clear that the UNC Board of Governors erred in sending the charge back to WSSU to determine his fate. If there is a legitimate reason that Davis is deemed not worthy of the WSSU faculty, Chancellor Cleon Thompson should have the courage to deny him tenure and say why. But the process shouldn't be fooled with to the point where it casts an ugly shadow on the image of the university.

Credo of the Black Press

The Black Press believes that America can best lead the world away from antagonisms when it accords to every person — regardless of race or creed — full human and legal rights. Hating no person, the Black Press strives to help every person, in the firm belief that all are hurt as long as anyone is held back.

About letters . . .

The *Chronicle* welcomes letters as well as guest columns from its readers. Letters should be as concise as possible and should be typed or legibly printed. The letter must also include the name, address and telephone number of the writer to ensure the authenticity of the letter. Columns must follow the same guidelines and will be published if they are of interest to our general readership. The *Chronicle* will not publish any letters or columns that arrive without this information. We reserve the right to edit letters and columns for brevity and clarity. Submit letters and columns to

Chronicle Mailbag
P.O. Box 1636
Winston-Salem, N.C. 27102.