

FORUM

Welfare Reform: The New, Raw, and Real Deal

Up from Slavery. That was the title of the autobiography of Booker T. Washington, the 19th century's greatest spokesman behind the call for social uplift of newly-freed slaves. To him, this was America—where the individual, rooted in a spirit of self-help and industriousness—could take advantage of many opportunities that existed, in spite of racism.

In fact, to Booker T., a mule-like trudge through the racism would end in a glorious display of achievement, proving to the African Amer-

icans their self worth; and, to his white fellow citizens, it would dispel the widely-held belief that blacks were lazy and had become dependent on hand-outs from slavemasters and kindly whites.

What is more, think next time you drive past a public housing complex, that the people there are physically quite far from where the jobs are! "A welfare recipient, if they wanted to, could find a job by sunset," but, the jobs are outside the urban core. For the many for whom commuting and the drop-off at the day-care is a way of life, there are many more who lack transportation and are too unschooled in the culture of work to get and hold a job. It is very hard for people to do what they never had an opportunity to do and can't get there to be around those from whom they could learn how to do it.



Booker T. Washington

Many of us who commute each day spend more on gasoline, lunch, and dry cleaning than is to be earned by those who would fill our tanks, wash our cars, serve our meals, bathe our loved ones at the hospitals and convalescent centers, clean and guard our offices and hotel rooms and pick our veggies. These jobs—most of which are part time—are held by the working poor who are paid less than \$7 an hour. Virtually all low-wage jobs are temporary or part time and nearly two in ten of those who hold these jobs work less than 30 hours a week. And, these poor souls must still depend in part of public assistance such as food stamps and subsidized housing.

With the rate of inflation, such workers could buy 25% more with similar earnings twenty years ago. For women, marriage has always been the best alternative to welfare; but, for the average poor African American women, the wages of the few available men they could marry have fallen lower than theirs! These men are more likely to be high school dropouts and tainted by infractions with the law.

Even so, Booker T. would be happy to know that in spite of what the framers of the Contract With America are saying, many welfare recipients do try to make it by working. But, for what we know about the difference between the reality and the myths, two-thirds who do go to work return to the rolls within three years. 30 hours a week brings in about \$900 a month, without any benefits. Take \$200 for child care, \$150 for transportation, leaving about \$550 for everything else. Such folk, like those of us trying to lower our earnings and taxes equations, are not fools. They can get \$375 a month from AFDC, up to \$325 in food stamps for a family of three, free health care through Medicaid, and assistance for housing, heat, and transportation. Who needs a high school diploma or a low-paying job to figure which is a Raw Deal, a New Deal, or the Real Deal? In today's world, lawmakers might do better to figure out ways to provide welfare recipients job training so that they will qualify for tolerable jobs, with child and health care.

(Dr. William H. Turner is a regular freelance columnist for the Chronicle).

LIFT EVERY VOICE

By Dr. WILLIAM H. TURNER

icans their self worth; and, to his white fellow citizens, it would dispel the widely-held belief that blacks were lazy and had become dependent on hand-outs from slavemasters and kindly whites.

Now we are faced with a new twist on Booker T's vision. Peter Kilborn of the New York Times calls it *Up From Welfare*: how the Contract With America might be the driving force behind efforts to encourage, inspire, induce and prod the seven million Americans who benefit from AFDC—the principal welfare program—into work and lives of self-sufficiency.

The form of the welfare system, as concerns African Americans—principally women would propel these head of welfare households into the Great American Middle Class. Too many welfare recipients are seen as having come to expect and accept government handouts. They are shiftless and lazy. They won't take the jobs that are available so that they to can join the middle class. Sounds great.

Few of the many people who don't understand why those mired in poverty don't simply get out and work do not realize that the economy is not like it was in the days of Mr. Washington. In fact, those of us who are highly-educated and with technical skills may not know that the hourly wages are the stingiest since the welfare system, as we know it, came in with FDR's New Deal. How many of us from smug suburban homes with green lawns and picket fences stood in line last year in NYC with the 15 black women heads of household chasing a single \$4.25 an hour job in a fast-food restaurant? A year later, 75% of them in that line still don't have a job.

How much do we know about the labor market that is glutted with people who are better qualified than most welfare recipients? How many people in good-paying trades such as plumbers, electricians, and construction workers—who sneer at idle black men—were themselves steered into their jobs by apprenticeship programs? Now the Republican Congress, through the Contract With America, is hell bent to close down affirmative action programs that goad employers to hire the very

Community Members Should Volunteer in Afrocentric Schools

This may be the last column I'll write for some time about the Coalition on African American Education's proposal for "high quality, Afrocentric" schooling in Winston-Salem as soon as possible. It is the last column because I've been writing for over a month as to what this means. We appreciate the Chronicle's coverage because the daily "newspaper" failed to even give us the courtesy of an interview, for almost five months. And when they did cover an Afrocentric educator, on April 20, they put "Afrocentric" in quotation marks depicting skepticism and cynicism that anyone can understand the word. You'll notice they didn't put "magnet zone" in quotation marks when they headlined the school systems proposal.

We refuse to believe that "the learning curve on Afrocentricism is so large it means either everything to everyone or nothing to anyone." Instead, the Coalition believe it has defined Afrocentricism for expression in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County public schools and in the columns over the last several weeks.

You'll recall we've written of "unconscious Afrocentricism" meaning high expectation of students, strong administrative leadership, strict teacher/principal discipline and schools as institutional presences that center a community. We've also discussed "Conscious Afrocentricism" including valuing Africa through the Ethiopian, Egyptian, Ghanaian, Malican, and Songhayan civilizations, an African American history of resistance to oppression, understanding different Black learning styles and other recently published data on African American students, having school buildings, classrooms, flags, songs, culture and teaching styles reflective of the history and inheritance of Black folk.

Finally, conscious Afrocentricism would create a very strong community advisory group to the principal and faculty of these schools with the notion that "it takes a whole village to raise one child." All of us who are well educated and middle class need not only to talk about schools, we need to volunteer in these schools. Indeed, whatever the level of education or unemployment all parents and all persons of good will can be volunteer because everyone has something to offer. If my own two children are able to get a chance to be educated at these schools, I would love for them to; but whether they are or not, I will be a volunteer at these schools.

the school system to do for us. This is something the organized Black Community is asking the school system to partner with us as we take back the primary responsibility for educating our children. A strong community advisory group would also be in the business of raising money. Currently, the three county wide magnet Elementary Schools,



GUEST COLUMNIST

By REV. CARLTON EVERSLEY

the Downtown School, Kimberly Park and Moore's, have some of the lowest percentage of poor children. Consequently, a very socio-economically elite group of parents raise high significant sums of money (in Moore's case, more than the \$70,000 of my churches annual budget). Does anyone believe the P.T.A. at say, the proposed Diggs School or Forest Park is capable of such amounts of cash? How else will they compete for computer technology and the like unless folks whose children either don't attend or are grown, help raise dollars?

Everyone who works in these schools as professionals, should undergo annual mandatory racial/cultural sensitivity training, that is administratively monitored. At least 60 percent of the teaching faculty should be Black with perhaps an African American principal and a non-African American assistant principal. Black educators don't automatically or always know how to work with all Black children, because some of them are so "middle class" they look down their noses at poor folk of any race. I know by my 1,082 mile drive through Trenton, NJ; Philadelphia, Pa; and Washington, DC, last week, as well as by meeting Ray Johnson, principal of Paul Roberson Academy in Detroit that Afrocentric, high quality curriculum instruction and learning cannot only meet all state educational requirements, they can greatly surpass them.

(Rev. Carlton Eversley is pastor of Dellabrook Presbyterian Church).

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PUBLIC NOTICE

The City of Winston-Salem Department of Transportation will hold a public Drop-in meeting to provide information and answer questions on the proposed extension of West Clemmons Road to Peters Creek Parkway (NC 150). All citizens are invited to attend the meeting on:

Wednesday May 3, 1995, 4:00 - 8:00 p.m. Georgia E. Taylor Recreation Center 1471 West Clemmons Road, Winston-Salem

For additional information, please call (910) 727-2707. All requests for appropriate auxiliary aids, services and transportation must be made to Greg Errett at (910) 727-2707 or TDD (910) 727-8319.



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING REZONING OF PROPERTY CITY OF WINSTON-SALEM

The Board of Alderman will consider requests to amend the City of Winston-Salem Zoning Ordinance by rezoning property as shown below:

Date: May 15, 1995 Time: 7:30 P.M. Place: Board of Aldermen Chamber, City Hall

- Petition of Samaritan Ministries and Samaritan Soup Kitchen; property located on the southeast corner of Patterson Avenue and Northwest Boulevard; from LB and GI to PB. W-1959.
- Petition of D. Wayne and Sandra Williams; property located at the west intersection of First Street, Cloverdale Avenue and the westbound on-ramp of Business 40 at Cloverdale Avenue; from RM-18 to NO. W-1961.
- Petition of United House of Prayer for Special Use Permit Issued by the Board of Aldermen for Institutional Parking in a Residential (RS-7) Zoning District (UDO Section 2-5.52); property located on the east side of Ivy Avenue between 25th Street and 27th Street. W-1960

The Board will also consider the following amendments to the Unified Development Ordinances:

- Proposal of Carolina Investment Properties, INC. to amend "Table 3.8 Off-Street Parking Requirements" of the Unified Development Ordinances (UDO). This proposal is a request to decrease the parking requirements for "Medical and Surgical Offices" and "Medical or Dental Laboratories" for buildings that have more than 10,000 square feet gross floor area - Zoning Text UDO-4.
- Proposal to amend "Section 3-1 Salem Lake Watershed Protection (F,W)" and "Section 4-1 Watershed Protection (F)" of the Unified Development Ordinances (UDO). This proposal is a request for "Special Intense Development Allocations (SIDA)" which would permit up to five percent (5%) of these watersheds to be developed with up to seventy percent (70%) development - Zoning Text UDO-6

Prior to the hearing, interested persons may obtain any additional information which is in the possession of the City/County Planning Board in that office City Hall on weekdays, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Interested citizens will be given an opportunity to be heard. All requests for appropriate and necessary auxiliary aids and services may be made within a reasonable time prior to the hearing to Angela Carmon at 727-2056 or TDD No. 727-8319.

THIS MEETING WILL BE BROADCAST LIVE ON CITY TV-13.

Marie Matthews, Secretary to the Board of Aldermen

Winston-Salem Chronicle

617 N. Liberty Street Winston-Salem, N.C. 27102

The Winston-Salem Chronicle is published every Thursday by the Winston-Salem Chronicle Publishing Co. Inc.

The Winston-Salem Chronicle was established by Ernest Pitt and Ndubisi Egemonye in 1974.

The Chronicle is a proud member of: Audit Bureau of Circulation • National Newspapers Publishers Association • North Carolina Press Association • North Carolina Black Publishers Association, Inland Press Association National Advertising Representative Amalgamated Publishers, Inc. • 45 West 45th St • New York, NY 10036 (212) 869-5220

How to Reach us. . .

910-722-8624 • Fax 910-723-9173

NEWS STAFF
VERONICA CLEMONS • JEROME RICHARD
723-8428

PRODUCTION
KATHY LEE, SUPERVISOR • CHARLOTTE DULA
SCARLETT SIMMONS • VERONICA EVANS

CIRCULATION
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