

OPINION/ FORUM

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Critics target another WSSU chancellor

Winston-Salem State University Chancellor Donald Reaves is under attack from the worst kind of enemies – ones without faces, names or spines to stand-up and speak their minds and voice their concerns.

If there are valid concerns that some have about the chancellor's leadership thus far in his short reign at the campus, then they should be brought up the way that grown folks are supposed to address concerns. Reaves has not and should not respond to Internet Web sites and unsigned letters. That kind of silly communication may fly in elementary schools, but it is completely silly when adults engage in it.

It is beneath us as a city and certainly as a community to express ourselves this way. Detractors should be man or woman enough to speak their minds freely.

Prior to the appointment of Chancellor Harold Martin, underground efforts to agitate against WSSU chancellors had become the norm, so much so that perhaps the UNC system should warn prospective applicants for the job that they will likely face knives in their backs as soon as they arrive on the school's campus.

Martin enjoyed a reprieve from that negativism, allowing him to accomplish the goals without such distractions. But others were not as lucky. This covert network of negativism waged war and won. Granted, Martin is a unique leader, a man who can get others to not only see his grand vision, but embrace it wholeheartedly.

Reaves has the ability to be one of WSSU's best leaders ever. His stated mission has always been to improve the academic standing of all students and the reputation of WSSU. Are these bad goals? We don't think so.

No one wants to go to a school with low standards and low expectations. Students tend to live up to what instructors and mentors expect of them. You don't lower your standards to accommodate students. High expectations are placed on students to prepare them to compete in a global society where jobs are fiercely contested.

There may be some legitimate concerns floating around out there, but that's what dialogue is all about. If everyone cared about the university, there wouldn't be a \$2 million shortfall anywhere. WSSU has many graduates who should want to help. Maybe detractors should be challenging alumni to step up. Where are the gifts and endowments? Dr. Reaves invested \$100,000 of his own money in the university. Who else has done that?

This should not be a fight, rather it should be a "let's make WSSU the greatest university in the state" open dialogue.

Now that Dr. Harold Martin is chancellor at N.C. A&T, we know the standards for that great university are going to be even higher. We all know that Dr. Martin will take A&T to greater heights. Should WSSU become a Division I school, which it should, the rivalry should serve both schools well.

The community needs to stop trying to abort change. We all need to try to find common ground that best serves the university and its students.

P.S. The Chronicle invites the blogger who has created the anti-Reaves Web site to reveal himself or herself. We will be happy to sit down with the blogger to do a story about his or her concerns.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Keep kids on the move

To the Editor:

I just wanted to thank you for including the article "Afterschool providers told to get kids moving" in the May 7th edition of The Chronicle because its information is so important to readers.

Between schools cutting physical education and recess time and the rising popularity of video games, our children aren't given the opportunity to be active and develop healthy living habits.

The article discussed the importance of choosing afterschool programs where chil-



Shawan Gabriel

dren can be active and have positive role models. Now that school's almost over, I think it's important to men-

tion that parents should look for the same aspects in summer day camp. Not only should children be in a safe environment, but also one that challenges them to be more active, more conscientious and more curious about the world around them. Whether it's at the YMCA or elsewhere, I hope that parents will keep this in mind.

And parents shouldn't forget about their own health, either. As a parent myself, I know it's hard to find the time to take care of our own needs because we're so busy providing and caring for our children. I would like everyone to know that the entire family is welcome at the YMCA. We have great programs for kids and adults of

all ages. We have a variety of fitness classes and even specialized weight-management programs like Y-Weigh. However, the YMCA is about helping people reach their God-given potential in spirit, mind and body. Invest in your own health, whether it's spiritual, emotional or physical. We want to help you succeed. Come in to try the YMCA for free or just come in for some coffee and some good conversation. Everyone's part of the family at the YMCA.

Thanks for always sharing such positive and informative articles.

Shawan Gabriel,
Executive Director of the
Winston Lake Family YMCA

POWELL FIGHTS BACK



Ron Walters
Guest Columnist

"Face the Nation" was probably a favored TV venue on Sunday, May 24 for most watchers of the Sunday talk shows.

That's because former Secretary of State Colin Powell defended his place in the Republican Party from charges by Rush Limbaugh and former Vice President Dick Cheney. On the same show a week earlier, Cheney said that he preferred Limbaugh to Powell, who had left the Republican Party because he voted for Barack Obama. Limbaugh said that Powell did it only because Obama was Black.

Powell fired back coolly that neither Cheney nor Limbaugh were on the membership committee of the Republican Party and as such could not decide who was or was not a Republican.

More important, Powell reaffirmed his status as a moderate Republican like the recently deceased Jack Kemp. I will always remember coming back from Japan several years ago, getting a connecting flight in Los Angeles and because the airline had fouled our reservation, it gave my wife and I first class seats.

Our seats happened to be next to Secretary of Housing Jack Kemp and he proceeded to talk both our right arms off, all the way to Washington, DC. He seemed not to have a racially sensitive bone in his body and was genuinely concerned about policies that would make life better for the disadvantaged Blacks.

He was excited by his alliance with Kemi Gray, a strong public housing activist whom I knew in Washington, DC, who was trying to empower poor public housing



residents.

I was not surprised to see that he would become a member of Howard University's Board of Trustees. Colin Powell also was a member of Howard's Board of Trustees, signaling his own sensitivity to concerns facing the Black community.

I attended the 1996 convention as a researcher when Powell gave the keynote speech, and when he said that he supported Affirmative Action, he was loudly booed by the Right wing of the Party. However, in his "Face the Nation" appearance, Powell cited several statistics upon which he concluded that for the Republican Party to remain viable it had to be an inclusive "big tent" party that would not only make a place for moderates, but move closer toward the moderate positions that define why the country is now supporting Democrats. He rejected the small government view that

Americans wanted effective government, especially now that the private sector had run aground and carried the country with it.

Powell, however, does not deserve complete absolution for his role in the administration of George Bush. He said he was briefed (like Nancy Pelosi) on the fact that the CIA was considering the use of Enhanced Interrogation Techniques like water boarding, but didn't object, fearing another 9/11 attack.

But Powell was silent when he should have been publicly livid that they put his considerable integrity at issue. Perhaps his way of telegraphing his displeasure was to vote for Barack Obama. Nevertheless, Bush and Cheney should have been grateful that Colin Powell has not done what so many Bush insiders have done, either publish a tell-all book or go on the stump, burnishing their role – and their legacy – in the atro-

cius decisions made by the Bush/Cheney team.

I have always felt – and still feel – that Colin Powell should be the leader of the Moderate wing of the Republican Party, but that would require him to confront the Right wing hegemony of the party in much stronger terms than anyone has done so far.

He notes quite rightly that the base of the party is narrow and if it continues to shrink, events will pass it by. Perhaps this truth should motivate Michael Steele, the current RNC Chair, and rather than feeding the radical Right and "laying prostrate," as Powell said, before Rush Limbaugh, he should help turn the corner.

Yet, his latest statements suggesting that he would go after Barack Obama were crafted in the Limbaugh/Cheney country and now govern Congressional Republican approaches.

The lack of a vigorous Moderate wing of the Republican Party keeps it from joining a rational consensus about the needs of the country and supporting policies that are important to serve the American people which have no ideological bent. Barack Obama has proposed pragmatic approaches that need Republican support but the radical Right has rejected most of them.

This is a moment of opportunity for both Powell and Steele that will test the true courage of their commitment to their country, rather than just to their party.

Ronald Walters is the Distinguished Leadership Scholar, Director of the African-American Leadership Center and Professor of Government and Politics at the University of Maryland College Park. His latest book is: *The Price of Racial Reconciliation* (Univ. of Michigan Press)