

OPINION

THE CHRONICLE

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Our Mission

The Chronicle is dedicated to serving the residents of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County by giving voice to the voiceless, speaking truth to power, standing for integrity and encouraging open communication and lively debate throughout the community.

UNC Board appears set on reversing historic gains

The Republican-controlled UNC Board of Governors appears to be going full-throttle to find ways to dismantle the University of North Carolina system as we know it. A board member told NCPolicyWatch.com that the board is moving to "right-size" the 17-campus UNC system. This means possibly closing the five historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) in North Carolina.

The state's HBCUs - Winston-Salem State University, Elizabeth City State University, Fayetteville State University, North Carolina A&T State University and North Carolina Central University - have been a part of North Carolina for more than a century.

First, there was the University of North Carolina, which was chartered by the North Carolina General Assembly in 1789. In 1877, the General Assembly began adding institutions of higher education, diverse in origin and purpose. The five historically black institutions were added, and another was founded to educate Native Americans. Several were created to prepare teachers for the public schools. Others had a technological emphasis. One is a training school for performing artists. Other schools were added in 1931 and 1971. The last school was added in 1985.

WSSU was founded by Dr. Simon Green Atkins as Slater Industrial Academy. To see that the school has developed into Winston-Salem State University, a four-year institution, says volumes about how HBCUs have evolved. With so much history and successes behind them, HBCUs should be touted.

However, the UNC Board of Governors is targeting the HBCUs, which seem to be easy targets. What is the Board's thinking? That North Carolina doesn't need smaller schools that cater to specific populations? Does the board want North Carolina to return to the 19th century?

North Carolina is known for its wide array of educational opportunities for students and expertise opportunities for professors and staff members. North Carolina is known for its HBCUs, which have graduated minority and non-minority students who have gone on to be outstanding, productive citizens. The list of those students could go on and on. What would have happened if the colleges had not been there to educate them?

UNC Board of Governor member Harry Smith Jr., who is chairman of the UNC Board's budget and finance committee, told NCPolicyWatch.com that "You've got to have a conversation about HBCUs. And how many you need, we've got five," which is more public HBCUs than any other state. He seems to think the UNC system is too big.

Although Smith said the Board will look at the entire system for inefficiencies, he seems to think it will be easy to target the HBCUs because of the number there are in North Carolina. How many should there be? Then again, why are there any state-supported schools of higher education? Why do we even need a UNC Board of Governors? Why do we need 32 members?

The North Carolina Senate and House will be voting soon on which 16 citizens will be appointed to the Board because 16 of the 32 positions are up for renewal this year.

Why can't the Republican-controlled North Carolina General Assembly change the number of members on the board, like members are changing the number of members of several cities' lawmaking bodies? If lawmakers can change Greensboro's lawmaking body, for instance, why can't they change the Board of Governors? The Board of Governors seems rather large.

The line of thinking supported by the UNC Board of Governors is terribly flawed. The rich history of higher education in North Carolina is threatened. The Board appears headed toward arbitrarily deciding what is best for North Carolina's higher education system. That's not how the system was built.

If the Board continues on this path, the history of the higher education system in North Carolina will read more like a tragedy than a drama with a happy ending.



Is insanity a requirement for people to be black and Republican in U.S.?



Bill Turner
Guest Columnist

In early March, when as-yet unannounced 2016 Republican presidential candidate Dr. Ben Carson stated his views on gays, I turned to an old saying that explains what some blacks do to become authentic and valued figures in conservative circles: "First, they fill their mouths with marbles. Next, they start talking. Then, when they have lost all of their marbles, they become legitimate and respected Republicans!"

Dr. Carson is on an ever-lengthening list of blacks who, in order to cozy up to the extreme right wing of the GOP, will utter the most conspicuously offensive words, all in service to firing up right wing support. Black Republican Vernon Robinson of Winston-Salem - Dr. Carson's campaign director, himself a perennial candidate, while running recently for NC's 5th congressional district - used the slogan: "Jesse Helms is back. This time he is black!" Mr. Robinson might want to add right-wing nut job to his impressive resume, which includes study at the US Air Force Academy and University of Missouri MBA School.

If Dr. Carson - a highly acclaimed pediatric neurosurgeon - is right when he says that "a lot of people who go into prison straight, and when they come out, they're gay," then it could be assumed that a lot of blacks who go into the Republican party stable and sane become flat-out foolish and say things that are disreputable, divisive, hurtful and very, very stupid.

Dr. Carson joins the ranks of Associate Justice Clarence Thomas who

came up with several sharp and disgusting insults against affirmative action during confirmation hearings for his Supreme Court seat. Both The College of Holy Cross and Yale Law School are on record for the programs they put in place in the 1960s to compensate for the exclusion of black students like

USA will cease to exist." When Mia Love, a Haitian-American Mormon, became the first black Republican woman elected to the U.S. Congress last fall, she poooh-pooohed the premise of a question about the role of her race or the immigrant status of her parents in her election. "I think what we need to mention here is this had nothing do

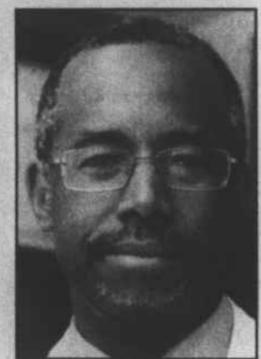
blacks believe in uplifting, personal responsibility, family values, and religious virtue. Once on the mountaintop of media attention, however, these black believers in God and country, say, in the words of former Florida Congressman Alan West, "As conservatives, we don't care about the color of your skin; we care about the color of our flag."



Cain



Love



Carson

"As conservatives, we don't care about the color of your skin; we care about the color of our flag."

-Former Congressman Allen West

Clarence Thomas. Godfather Pizza CEO Herman Cain often fueled his 2012 run for the Republican presidential nomination with belligerent statements such as: "Don't blame Wall Street, don't blame the big banks. If you don't have a job and you are not rich, blame yourself!"

Who can forget - or remembers - black Republican Alan Lee Keyes, whom President Ronald Reagan appointed to the State Department in 1985 and who later moved to Illinois in an attempt to take the Senate seat once occupied by Barack Obama, about whom he said: "Obama is a radical Communist... we are either going to stop him or the

with race," she said. "Understand that Utahans have made a statement that they're not interested in dividing Americans based on race or gender. That's really what made history here. It's that race and gender had nothing to do with it. Principles had everything to do with it, and Utah values had everything to do with it." Wearing blinders or rose-colored glasses dismiss and distort, but they do not drive out reality.

Black Republicans running for office not only start at the political center, at the very least, but, once acknowledged publicly, they quickly move to an over-the-top message that deliberately ignores the historical fact that most

People like Herman Cain, Ben Carson, Allen Keyes, Mia Love, Vernon Robinson, Clarence Thomas, Alan West, and many other black conservatives, including Thomas Sowell and Condoleezza Rice, are all very sharp, quick-witted, and exceptionally intelligent people. Too bad that in order to be appealing and saleable inside the predominantly white Republican Party they feel obligated to perform a version of themselves that is equivalent to having lost their marbles. No matter one's political affiliation, in that game, we all lose.

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