

# EDITORIALS

## Schools Deserve Respect

We have read with considerable interest Charlotte attorney Ralph McMillian's article on Charlotte's busing "success" that appeared on the editorial page of the Wall Street Journal last week. Mr. McMillian takes strong exception to our local school system being labeled "a shining example of how busing can succeed in accomplishing desegregation without lowering the quality of education." Likewise, we have read editorials in the Charlotte Observer and the Charlotte News that challenge Mr. McMillian's viewpoint on the school busing issue.

Nevertheless, these opposing perspectives, the historic facts of busing, the merits of using the diminishing disparity on competency test scores between black and white students to judge the success or failure of busing, and the plight of those parents - both white and black - who oppose busing for their children all seem irrelevant to the real and larger challenge of the public schools.

While too many adult Americans cannot or won't integrate their neighborhoods, churches or social organizations; cannot or won't quit smoking and drinking alcoholic beverages; cannot or won't lead their children in prayer in the home; cannot or won't practice honesty and trustworthiness in their work and private lives; and cannot or won't instill the work ethic in their children as it relates to academic study and other aspects of their young lives.

These failings of a large number of American parents have shifted an enormous and unfair burden to the public school system. Thus many public schools around the nation are being criticized by these same parents because of a presumed lack of adequate academic standards. The schools are being pressured to assume an even greater role in rearing children or serving as foster parents. The price that many schools pay for these pressures are lower academic standards.

Public school integration has placed the moral responsibility for creating a fairer and more just society on the backs of public youth, teachers and administrators because in the larger society adults lack the

courage to assume this responsibility. This is evident by our still largely segregated residential neighborhoods that result in the need for school busing. Similarly, such adults attend segregated churches and social functions. How then can we expect children to believe and understand the values in the dignity of all people.

Recently, television commercials have been used to remind young people of the dangers of smoking and drinking. Unfortunately, such commercials are often followed by other commercials encouraging adults to drink beer and making smoking appear glamorous. Likewise, we adults don't have the courage to stop smoking, and thus set examples for our children, so again we place the burden on the school to establish ways and means to stop students on school grounds.

Recently it was noted in the media that cheating in the local public schools is an accepted practice by students. This attitude of dishonesty is too often encouraged by indifferent teachers and parents who practice other forms of dishonesty - untruthfulness on your income tax return is one example.

Finally, while much controversy has arisen over the question of prayer in the public schools, we have to wonder how many adults have daily prayer in their homes with their children.

We have made these observations not to belittle the significance of the school busing issue but rather as a defense of school busing and many social burdens that are placed on the public schools. This has occurred because the larger adult community refuses to assume its responsibility for bringing about social change.

Then out of its own sense of guilt for failing to assume its proper responsibilities these same adults attack the public school by saying they don't have high academic standards.

Thus, until adult America begins to assume a true sense of responsibility in its values, attitudes and behavior, we may have school busing and the presumption but not the fact of substandard public school education.

## Exonerate Bernhard Goetz

The now well-known "Death Wish" folk hero Bernhard Goetz who shot four youth on a New York City Subway train for trying to rob him was indicted for criminal possession of a weapon. However, the grand jury did not indict him for attempted murder.

We fully agree with this decision because it is utterly foolish to assume through a court of law that a person does not have the right to protect himself. However, Mr. Goetz now may face the equally foolish

charge of having violated "the civil rights of these youth." We have to wonder how a person acting in self-defense can be said to be violating his attacker's civil rights.

It is high time that we got some sense into our laws so that citizens can feel secure and safe in their travels especially in these large cities.

New York City is a dangerous place to live and work. Thus, if the police are not around to protect citizens, citizens must protect themselves. If this is not justice and fair play nothing else is.

## STOP DAILY FLIGHTS OF BLACK CAPITAL FROM BLACK COMMUNITIES

WHITES APPEAR DETERMINED TO FORFEIT THE CITIES TO BLACKS AND IT IS INCONCEIVABLE THAT THE PEOPLE WHO THROUGH FORCED SLAVE LABOR BUILT THIS COUNTRY FOR OTHERS, CANNOT NOW WILLINGLY UNITE TO REBUILD OUR COMMUNITIES FOR OURSELVES.



## Women Who Bear Cost Of Child Support

It's a phenomenon so new that the census bureau hasn't started collecting data about it - women who bear the costs of child support. It has happened so gradually that most jurisdictions have not found it necessary to take note. Even estimates are hard to come by.

Still, the topic is attracting a great deal of national attention. A general backlash against feminism is being played out in the family courts of this country and unfortunately, its happening away from all public scrutiny. All this grows from the gradual erosion of one of the cherished assumptions of contemporary American life that the mother almost invariably gets custody of the children. In the 1970s the courts and the legislatures began mandating equal treatment of the sexes. Fathers' rights groups arose to contest the traditional patterns of granting custody.

In approximately 90 percent of divorces which custody is uncontested, the children continue to end up with the mother. However in contested cases a different story arises. Recent studies



Sabrina Johnson

have found that fathers who ask for custody win 50 to 63 percent of the time.

Since women no longer feel assured of getting custody the fact remains that the impact outside of court is the most difficult to cope with. The bargaining climate in uncontested cases has changed substantially: women who are afraid of losing custody will trade away anything else - child support, property, alimony - to keep it from happening. They end up bargaining away substantial amounts of their potential financial recovery.

In the cases where the

father does win custody, the mother is more and more likely to be required to pay support. A 1983 survey of 517 mothers without custody found that 71 of the women (14 percent) paid support. 1981 census figures indicate that 35 percent of fathers without custody pay child support not to mention the 59 percent of those who should be paying.

A study done at the University of Maryland found that the average payment by women to be \$40.37 per week on the average, a figure slightly less than their male counterparts who pay a reported average per week of \$40.50. These women had an average income of \$16,298 which is considerably above the median income of \$8,887 in 1983 for single mothers.

Even with the slightly higher than average income, studies show that the women are preoccupied with money. A great many studied (91.5 percent) had voluntarily relinquished custody. When asked why - the answers were money oriented in that the ex-spouse had more money and could offer the child a "better" life. Child support payment take up 13 percent of the average male salary. There is no comparable figure for women, however it has been found that \$40 plus per week takes a much bigger bite out of a woman's salary than a man's.

There is no substantial data that proves how good or bad female or male support is, but one conclusion remains somewhat true - everybody's impression that mothers who are required to pay support, they risk greater hardship. The attitude of "equal rights means you are going to pay too" and wage inequity is hurting women rather hard.

A general standard suggests the parent's ability to pay versus the child's needs works in theory but not necessarily in practice. Some courts use guidelines or charts but even they lose uniformity in this matter.

### Anger Workshop

WomenTeach will offer a session workshop on "Anger" beginning February 6 (Wednesday) from 10:30 a.m.-12 noon at WomenTeach Center. We discover our angry feelings learn to make the best use of them... this will be the focus of workshop.

This unique workshop will be facilitated by Betty Crook and Saxon.

For more information register call a WomenTeach counselor Monday-Saturday 10-4 p.m. at 394-3514.

All women are welcome WomenTeach, where all are free, a United Way Agency.

### From Capitol Hill

## Blacks Have Hope, But Also Despair Of Reagan

Alfreda L. Madison Special To The Post  
In the tenth National Urban League report; "State of Black America," League President John Jacobs released the report at the time when the country is enjoying a strong economic recovery, and just before the inauguration of President Reagan who won a landslide victory. Jacobs said that Black people are not included in the recovery, they were not included in Reagan's landslide. He only received one out of every ten Black votes. The League President stated that there is a campaign to convince the American public that the failure of Blacks to vote for Reagan lies in their pro-Democratic allegiance. He denies that fact, and said the answer is found in the Administration's policy which is "damaging to their deepest interests."

"There has been retrogression in the Civil Rights arena, with the government waging war on affirmative action programs responsible for Black breakthroughs in education and in employment. There have been persistent cuts in social service programs that the poor rely on for survival. The numbers of poor people have increased, in part because of those policies cuts," said Jacobs.

The report states that white unemployment which is now six percent is considered full employment, contrasted with Black unemployment which is above fifteen percent, considered depression-level. Blacks made rapid strides towards parity in the sixties and seventies, but they have been sliding back in the eighties. The report urges Blacks to reverse that trend in 1985.



Alfreda L. Madison

Jacobs gave signs of hope for '85. The American spirit refuses to accept the fact that this nation is divided between a prosperous majority and an impoverished minority, the revival of the inter-racial non-partisan movement for racial justice, the Free South Africa Movement which crosses religious, conservatives, liberals and non-partisan groups, increased political participation which was fueled by Jesse Jackson's campaign, Representative William Gray's election as chairman of the House Budget committee which places him in a most important budget making position and a new spirit of concern by the Black community itself. Community concern takes form in focusing on teen-age pregnancy, education, crime and strengthening the Black family.

The report states that some problems can only be solved by Blacks themselves, and others require cooperation of both government and the private sector. Without government and private involvement, poverty will continue. Jacobs calls on corporate America

to accept its social responsibility by providing a training program for skilled workers that it needs. Business cannot thrive in the midst of urban decay, widespread poverty and social alienation. He stated that ghetto problems are not insoluble as some economists are trying to portray. Jacobs considered these as rigid views of fundamentalists, and he calls it a mean spirit. He says that President Reagan should end this mean spirit.

Jacobs stated that while he is hopeful that Reagan in his second term will be more forthcoming in reaching out to Blacks and the poor, he sees very little evidence that taking place.

Jacobs listed some steps the President must take to demonstrate his concern for racial justice:

Support the '85 Civil Rights bill now before congress, which protects minorities and women from discrimination that corrects the Supreme Court's Grove City decision.

Reappraise his "Constructive Engagement" South African policy which secures America's apartheid friendship. The President should instruct Administration officials to cool their rhetoric and stop fanning the flames of racial polarization by attacking Black organizations and affirmative action principles. Ending the shameful exclusion of Blacks from key positions. This is the worst appointment record of minorities in 25 years. Order a moratorium on budget cuts of successful programs that help America's 33 million poor. Order Cabinet and agency heads to institute regular meeting with leaders of the Black and the voluntary sector, and also to meet

with those individuals himself. The purpose of these meetings are not political stroking but a dialogue between those who have power and their constituents who are deeply affected by that power.

Jacobs says, "If this Administration can institute a new dialogue with Russia which it has called an evil empire, it can institute a new dialogue with that part of America that has time and again proved by its blood, sweat and tears its loyalty to America and to the principles of freedom and justice upon which our nation is based."

Jacobs calls on Mr. Reagan to break the racial pattern that keeps white and Black Americans in a state of self-defeating polarization and to begin the process that will make '85 State of Black America a more hopeful report. The Urban League panel stated that it is alright for the President to meet with many groups, including the Heritage Foundation but he must also meet with groups that question his policies. They said that schools cause white children to master technology while Black children are mastered by technology.

Both the electronic and print media are underrepresented by Blacks and they continue to misrepresent Blacks, except occasional laudableness of minorities. The media undermine Black children's image, causing them to be deprived educationally and culturally. Black leaders are subjected to harsh media treatment. The news media employ a double standard which results in more negative treatment of Blacks than whites.

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