

# RETURNING TO BUILD A BETTER BLACK COMMUNITY.



## EDITORIALS

### Nothing New--Sorry

We hate to burst the bubble of the two Duke University psychologists who think, according to a Thursday morning (June 10) news release, "no one else has discovered" their method for teaching reading. But the record should be set straight.

In part the story reads:

Two Duke University psychologists, saying the nation's schools are relying on false assumptions in failing to teach hundreds of thousands of poor children to read, have developed what they claim is a breakthrough method of reading instruction.

Drs. Michael and Lise Wallach say their method, taught over the nine-month school year, will result in most disadvantaged children learning to read in the first grade.

They say their key to success lies in teaching such children to recognize phonemes—the sounds letters of the alphabet stand for—which most class children already can do before school begins.

Many educators have long held that children cannot be taught phoneme recognition effectively, recommending that if a child hasn't picked up the ability on his own, teachers should wait until he is older before trying to master the concept.

Wallach is a professor of psychology at Duke, and his wife is a lecturer in the Department of Psychology. They developed their reading program over a five-year period.

They describe their new method and the results of their field research in a book, "Teaching All Children To Read," just published by the University of Chicago Press.

While disadvantaged children can hear the difference between "me" and "she," Wallach cited as an example in an interview, they do not know which starts with the sound "mmm"

and which with "shh."

After much trial and error, the Wallachs write, they realize that disadvantaged children need some kind of strategy to apply to a word that can make phonemes recognizable.

They discovered that breaking a word up—separating the first sound from the remaining sounds with a pause—accomplished what they were seeking.

"If a child can say 'r-ake' and 'p-ot', then it isn't hard to tell whether r-ake or p-ot starts with the sound 'rr,'" the researchers write.

Once a child learns to isolate the initial phoneme in a word, he no longer has any trouble recognizing it, the Wallachs say, and working with phonemes in places other than at the start of a word then comes easily.

Though their approach seems simple in the perspective of five years' work, the fact that no one else has discovered it is indicative of what Wallach called the shortage of "detective work" in the psychology of reading.

With all due respects to the good teachers, we believe they could have saved much of their "five years' work" by spending a few hours with Mrs. Ora Sneed Lee, Mrs. Mildred Amey or any one of countless other dedicated veteran first grade teachers, most of whom are now retired. They taught reading this way at least forty years ago and there are thousands of their former pupils in Durham, across the state and nation who are living testimony.

It wasn't until the anti-phonics forces practically took over in the late 1940's and early 1950's that inability to read and comprehend haunted public school pupils into high school.

Unless the Wallachs have discovered more than was described in the news release, what they have done is nothing new.

### Job Future Need Not Be Bleak

Nearly four million students will be vying for jobs this summer in an already tight labor market. The Labor Department has estimated that the youth labor forces will rise to 25.8 million by July or some 600,000 more than last year.

With official unemployment figures now at 7.3 per cent overall, and to three to four times that for black youth if we don't read the handwriting on the wall now, we deserve what is ultimately coming.

Among the thousands of graduates from all levels of educational institutions, entirely too many are poorly prepared to compete in a progressively more demanding job market. As we have stated so often in these columns, the time for concern begins at first grade and should head the list of

parental attention.

Parents must not be flattered by sweet sounding jargon about their children. It is not important. What is important and what will make the difference with each graduate when he reaches the job market is how well that youngster had internalized basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics and used these to build more sophisticated skills.

That disproportionate percentage of unemployment for black youth can be reduced. A large number of black youth are going to have to stop wasting so much time in school complaining and go to work. Someone once said education is 25 per cent teaching (if you're lucky) and 75 per cent learning. It will behoove us to get on with the task of learning, so that the unemployment figures decrease rather than increase.

## TO BE EQUAL

### Replacing The Welfare System

Given George McGovern's experience of having his 1972 presidential campaign run aground over his plan for an income maintenance system, it's unlikely that welfare reform will play much of a role in the current campaign.

But whether a Republican or a Democrat is elected in November, one of the first orders of business will have to be a plan to replace the present welfare system.

Part of the reason is that welfare costs are rising sharply, straining federal and local budgets, without however, providing adequate assistance to all in need.

Last year welfare costs rose by over 21 per cent, largely because of the rise in unemployment that left many families without resources. Continued high unemployment will mean increasing numbers of people forced onto the welfare rolls.

The impact of these costs has already led to calls for federalization of welfare as states and cities, already strapped financially, face the need to find money for welfare benefits to the victims of our economy. Four big-state governors have come out for federal take-over of welfare costs and many others would look favorably on such a development.

As an interim measure, federal take-over makes sense. It would relieve local budgets, impose fair national standards, and provide assistance to

the most hard-pressed cities and states.

But it could only be an interim solution because the present welfare system, even with a federal take-over of costs, would remain an inefficient, degrading system that grudgingly aids some while ignoring the needs of others. There would still be a means test to separate "us" from "them," and the program would remain a political football, a vehicle for condemning the poor and circulating myths and stereotypes.

It would be best to start from scratch and devise a system that recognizes the existence of poverty, the necessity to insure minimum living standards for all, and the need for a universal system designed to aid, not punish, people on the margins of a shaky economy that cannot now provide jobs for all.

Some twelve million people are now on the welfare rolls, nearly all of them too old or too young to work. That's only about half the people officially designated as poor, and if you take into account the way the official poverty level has lagged behind inflation, there may be as many as 40 million people who are actually poor.

By constructing a system that aids only those who manage to hurdle the barriers of stringent welfare system requirements, aid is denied to other people who are poor and to the millions just above the poverty line but who are also in need.

By VERNON E. JORDAN  
Executive Director National Urban League



It also creates conflicts between those who work for salaries not much above the welfare allotments and welfare recipients.

The answer to the welfare dilemma is a new income maintenance plan that would consist of a universal refundable credit income tax. It would work this way: Everyone would get a basic cash grant. The poor would keep it all, the near-poor would keep some of it, and middle and upper income families would have the grant taxed away.

Such a system would provide at least some assistance to the working poor while helping all moderate income families. It would reverse the present system of tax welfare that has been estimated at costing over \$100 billion in tax expenditures — loopholes that favor the wealthy.

The benefit levels could be set to encourage work, in contrast to the disincentives built into the present welfare system. And the new income maintenance system should be complemented by a national full employment policy to create jobs for all who can work.

Such a reform would end the degrading brutalization of the poorest among us while providing minimum living standards for us all. The nation isn't getting its money's worth from the problem-riddled present welfare system and change is long overdue.



### 'Congressman Hawkins' Column

### Right-Wingers Hurt Nation's

Why is it that at every available opportunity, citizens of this country who hold the conservative view, and particularly those in leadership positions in government, oppose the rights of human beings to enjoy a healthy and productive life. The answer to this question must come from outside the realm of reason IN THE LONG RUN.

Conservatives present themselves as being opposed to government taking a direct interest in serving the needs of people, particularly poor and disadvantaged people, among whom are the great majority of Blacks and other minorities. Conservatives oppose government programs designed to meet the needs of those who need most. It almost seems as if conservatives have a strong hatred for people.

Here we are, in the year 1976, and conservative hatred lingers on, threatening the rights of individuals, particularly Black people and other minorities, to equal opportunities in education, employment, housing, and other very important areas of human need. As a result, this conservative hatred finds itself in opposition to the goal of "equal justice for all."

The question is "Why?" The conservative argument for opposition to government programs which serve human needs is that these programs are against the interests of business and industry

in making profits, which are viewed by conservatives as being important to the welfare of our nation. The conservative viewpoint argues that, as profits are made, the general standard of living rises, and human needs are satisfied. The popular conservative slogans are: "Leave it to business and industry" and "The private enterprise system will solve the nation's problems." We ask ourselves: "Has it done so?" "Will it do so?"

If we look back over the course of history, we find that the conservative argument does not hold water. We have been through recessions, time after time, which have wiped out much of the gains we have achieved in times of plenty.

We have a long way to go to bring about a very real and vital concern and interest in serving human needs. The questions we must ask ourselves are: "Is the conservative, profit-oriented viewpoint the right way to achieve the goal of serving human needs?" "Are the interests of people being served any longer by the conservative viewpoint?" There is much reason to doubt that these questions can be answered: "Yes". Certainly a viewpoint that places the interests of business and industry above the interests of people is lacking in many ways. It lacks a sense of human understanding and human compassion. Profits are not the be all and end all of life. Government is not here solely for the pur-

pose of maintaining and protecting the profits of business and industry; at least, that is not what the purpose of government should be.

The purpose of government is to set the conditions for, or in other ways provide for, the general welfare of our citizens — all of our citizens. Government economic policies should be made to suit this goal. The welfare of its citizens should be the first priority of government. Obviously, this has not been the case. The interests of business and industry have been the top priorities of government, often in spite of suffering among certain groups in our society.

We very urgently need to change our national priorities. The "buddy-buddy" relationship between business and industry, on one hand, and government, on the other, no longer serves the interests of the American people, and it has continually served to defeat the interests of Black people and other minorities. We must work to help business and industry understand that interests and needs of people are important. We must urge government to see that its main responsibility is not to profits, but to people. Our national priorities, which help determine government economic policies, must focus on the needs of the citizens of our nation, and those needs are: education, employment, and housing.

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

How valid, for Orangeburg County Law Enforcement Officers is the Oath, "I swear to tell the Truth nothing but the Truth so help me God?"

A number of Black eyewitnesses to the killing of Emanuel Fogle by Orangeburg County Detective Clark Ryder on May 10, 1975 repeated this oath and their testimony revealed that Detective Clark Ryder with the Orangeburg County Sheriff's Department, a deputy and the Solicitor were

not telling the truth about the events leading up to and the senseless shooting of Emanuel Fogle, unarmed, in a ditch partly filled with water and covered by heavy foliage.

Mr. Ryder gave sworn statements in and out of court that he "positively" without doubt, saw Dennis Jarrett remove a purse from a parked automobile. The court believed the "Law" Officer Mr. Clark Ryder and convicted Dennis,

but thank God Dennis could talk and the Judge on the bench was human enough to listen to Dennis and those of us who again knew Clark Ryder was not telling the truth under oath.

Luckily for Dennis Jarrett he could talk. Doesn't this make you wonder about the shooting at the ditch May 10, 1975? Final rites for Emanuel Fogle were held May 18, 1975. Dennis Jarrett was exonerated

May 21, 1976. When will the citizens of Orangeburg County demand that lying under oath not be the order of the day and when will the final rites be given for Orangeburg County Law Enforcement Officials who lie under oath?

Creditability in public office is every citizen's business.

Oscar P. Butler, Jr.,  
President  
Orangeburg Branch,  
NAACP

200 YEARS AGO WHEN MOST PEOPLE COULD NOT READ MERCHANTS NATURALLY HUNG SIGNS THAT WERE IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZABLE. (BOOT SIGN, HAT SIGN, ETC.)



### Sage Advice

The sage advice delivered in the commencement address by the Honorable Barbara Jordan at Norfolk State perhaps bears some repetition here as once again thousands of young graduates pour out into the world of reality.

Foremost among the advice was the clear need for students to develop a capacity that will extend beyond their own careers. It is important to discover whether one will raise his voice for the common good or whether one will join the chorus of those who are looking out for their own interests.

The above thoughts were especially refreshing to hear when one considers the tremendous moral disillusionment that appears at all levels of our government, within the home and family as well as within the schools.

Truly, we need a leader in this country with a positive vision of the future. That positive vision must some-

how come out and take hold as we seek to overcome the Watergates, the sex scandals and the illicit spying in the lives of many Americans for no good reason.

It does take courage and commitment and willingness to stick to any task for a long time in order to reach any ultimate success.

Young blacks, must be aware that this is no time to conjure up new myths, new slogans—the old ones will suffice.

Young blacks are the ones who can activate solutions to problems. This takes careful and diligent planning. It is better to be educated to some extent than average education.

Education ends only with one's physical life. Second best, though it be good/should not bring contentment.

Anyone may get there as a token, but can stay there and move up if he/she is the best.

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