

JUVENILE CRIME:

Part I

The Sins Of The Father

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Thefts are attributed to the 15-18 age bracket. Youngsters below 18 committed 36,990 robberies, of which 10,156 were done by kids under 15.

In experience and potential danger they are set up to deal with the "Little Rascals" image of juvenile offenders in the past.

Juvenile crime is growing up. "Ten years ago juvenile crime wasn't too serious," says district court judge William Freeman. "Kids were usually in court for shoplifting or truancy. But today they are committing adult crimes -- robbery, assault, murder."

60% of these youthful offenders go on to become career criminals. The causes of juvenile crime are obvious, and unanimously stated: family problems, unemployment, poor schooling, and poverty. Everyone agrees on the causes. Finding solutions is much more complex. "The lack of good

parents is a factor," says Judge Freeman. "90% of the kids I see in court come from a one-parent or no parent home."

"There has been a break-down in the family relationship," agrees Rev. Horace Walser, supervisor of Forsyth County's Court Counseling Staff.

"We have one case of a 13-year old girl. Her mother has her on birth control pills. She's given venereal disease to quite a few young men. The mother is an alcoholic. Where is the girl now? We sent her back home. There's a shortage of foster homes. You can't remove 250 kids."

"Parents were better parents years ago," says Harold Ellison, coordinator of the Save Our Youth Program run by the Experiment in Self-Reliance. "There is a lack of guidance, and sometimes even love."

"Teenagers are getting pregnant at twelve and thirteen these days," he pointed out. "What kind of parents do you expect them to make? Sometimes we have a 9-year old kid

that we're working with, and his mother is only 22. She is too busy trying to make up for her own adolescence to bother with the child."

"Sometimes kids will come to me with a record of low grades in school, and I tell them to get some help at home," Ellison stated. "The kid will reply, 'Oh, Mom doesn't either.'"

"Where can he go for help?"

These young people are caught in a cycle of poverty and inadequate education. Born to teenage parents who did poorly in school they go to school with little encouragement or assistance from home, and they do poorly. Then they "get in trouble at an early age and bring the third generation into the cycle."

The North Carolina Crime Study Commission stated that it was impressed by the findings of research groups indicating: "a strong correlation between delinquency and learning disabilities."

"An especially strong correlation has been found between

poor reading ability and violent or disruptive juvenile behavior," the report stated.

But the schools are caught in the trap, and teaching is inhibited. 70,000 teachers were assaulted last year in the U.S. according to FBI reports. It has been estimated that one-half all classroom time is lost to discipline. This factor alone could cut learning in half. School can be a dangerous place for students and teachers. It can also be a mirror of hopelessness.

Sometimes youths are given "social promotions" even though they lack the ability to do more advanced work. By the time they reach high school they may be behavior problems out of boredom or frustration at their own inability to do the work.

"Kenny was a senior in high school," recalls one English teacher. "And he used to draw his answers. His writing was on a primary level, and his reading was very poor. And I was supposed to get him ready for college in one year!"

People like Jesse Jackson in Project Ex-

cel and programs like 70,001-Help Employ Youth try to deal with this problem, but it is hard to help a teenager who is years behind in schooling.

"By the time you get an 18-year old to see what his learning problems are, it isn't a lost cause," says WSSU Chancellor Dr. H. Douglas Covington.

But good schooling is the key to good jobs, and unemployment is another piece of the puzzle.

Teenage unemployment is the highest of any group in the country. Among black youths it has been estimated as high as 60%.

"If there were jobs available for everybody, our criminal problem would be cut in half," says Judge Freeman.

"Many kids can't find jobs," noted Harold Ellison. "Their parents are out working or socializing, so the kid is unsupervised. The ESR community houses close at 5 p.m., the city recreation centers are closed on weekends, school gyms are closed night and weekends. Where else can a kid go but the street?"

Incentive Program Suffers Fund Cut

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drama arts and creative rhythms.

The focus in each program area is on youth and the twelve officers who are actively involved in the programming effort, as coaches and counselors. By setting good examples for boys and girls and through becoming actively involved in the activities, the participants image of the public safety officer is improved.

The incentive program lowered the rate of juvenile arrest records. Using 1976 as an example, of the 1000 youths participating in the program only 50 youths were involved in juvenile arrests.

The total cost of the program is \$61,480 or \$37.28 per participant. The coordinator of the program Alfred Adams feels that this is not a lot of money to spend on a child.

"If the children get in trouble you'll spend more money than that," Adams said. "If the program is not continued a lot of kids won't have the opportunity to go to camp or enjoy the outdoor life, because this program is free."

Patterson YMCA Director Richard Glover feels that eliminating the program would have a detrimental effect.

"The rapport between the youth and the officers won't be as good," Glover said. "After all that's what the program is all about."

way to determine how operating on a reduced budget will affect the program.

BOYCOTT

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ready for action right now."

The NAACP Labor Relations Committee will continue to negotiate with the eight stores in an attempt to reach an agreement that will forestall the boycott.

If their attempts are not successful, one or more of the businesses involved with picket lines by July 1st.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From Page 4

interests as the Black voter's apathy worked against Black's interests on May 30!

So let me ask these poor people, rent payers and wage earners, "Do you recognize that the true kinship in America today is not as much within the races, as it is a kinship based upon common hardship and need. Are you going to remain ignorantly, racially complacent and apathetic, while your better-off, penny-pinching, Black and white neighbors rip you off again, by causing what they call "non-essential" government programs to be eliminated?!"

But it cannot be an apathetic one. It cannot succeed if it is racial, and it will not get off the ground if its supporters are complacent. The economic battle lines have been clearly drawn. The economically comfortable have already mustered their forces and have fired the first shots.

Mr. Williamson has issued a "Call to arms" to poor people. I wonder if these people, these traditional "losers," will be able to unite across racial lines, to assemble the necessary spirit and the support, to rise to this challenge!

Le Roy Meek
Board Member
Business Action League

Patrick Hairston

'40 Years In The Wilderness'

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him, and he wrote one up and brought it back to me. Now this young man had been living in Winston-Salem all his life, and you know how he spelled Forsyth? F-o-r-t-h."

He favors competency tests for high school students because it would make schools more accountable for what students learn -- or don't learn.

Hairston is concerned about the demoralizing effect of welfare on blacks. Giving people

Save Water And Money

Properly maintained landscape plants can add significantly to the financial worth of your property, and so it's a good idea to learn the amount of water plants actually require. Most plants can suffer as much, if not more, from excessive watering as from too little. Here is a useful



A LITTLE WATER GOES A LONG WAY toward healthy trees, and they go a long way toward high property value.

guideline suggested by the "Green Survival" professionals in the American Association of Nurserymen. Most trees, shrubs and other plants growing in the yard are seriously thirsty every week to 10 days. If there is not about the equivalent of an inch of rainfall over that period of time, then all those plants should be given sufficient water to make sure it reaches down to soak the root system.

For very little water, you can have a lot of lovely green around your house.

handouts instead of jobs makes them lose the will to work, he contends.

Pat Hairston is a fighter. "I was up in New York State," he recalls, "and I had to have a job. The steel mill up there was hiring people, but I didn't know anything about steel mills. I had never been in one in my life."

"When I went for the job interview, I looked up on the bulletin board to see what jobs were available, and I saw they needed chippers."

"I didn't even know what that was, but when they asked me what I could do, I said, 'I'm a chipper.'"

"They wanted to know where I had worked, and I said 'Salem Steel, Winston-Salem, North Carolina.' Shoot, Salem Steel wasn't even hiring blacks back then."

His prospective employers didn't know that, and Pat got the job. When he reported for work they paired him with an experienced man -- but they gave him no training because he had said he had experience, too.

Pat watched the other guy chipping at cracks in the steel for a few minutes, and then he gave it a try.

When he brought his chipping tool down on a crack in the hot steel, the blade flew out of the chipper and nearly cost him a partner.

"What are you doing?" roared the other man.

"I don't know what I'm doing," Pat confessed. "But I need a job. So you just show me how to do this job."

The man obliged -- and Pat worked in the steel

mill for a couple of years. He looked out for himself then -- and now -- because, he says, "It's foolish to rely on the descendants of slave-owners to help you get ahead."

He is working toward a solution to the black community's problem through a unified program. "We could start a black bank," Hairston pointed out. "Or a housing rehabilitation program. Look, there are 30,000 blacks in Winston-Salem, if we could get just a third of them to give a dollar a week -- that's \$10,000 a week you'd have to work with. That's a half a million dollars in one year! And even if you never get anything out of it yourself, you'd be helping some other black person get ahead."

He sighs. "They'll spend that money on records or some foolishness. They'd even give that much to the church. Why won't they do it to help themselves get ahead?"

He sees the obstacles, and he knows the flesh is weak in too many cases, but Patrick Hairston is not giving up.

He doesn't know how.

Sickle Cell

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justified. Sickle Cell tests will still be administered at the center for a fee. The program included education, screening, counseling and medical follow-up. About 42,000 people were screened during the five year period.

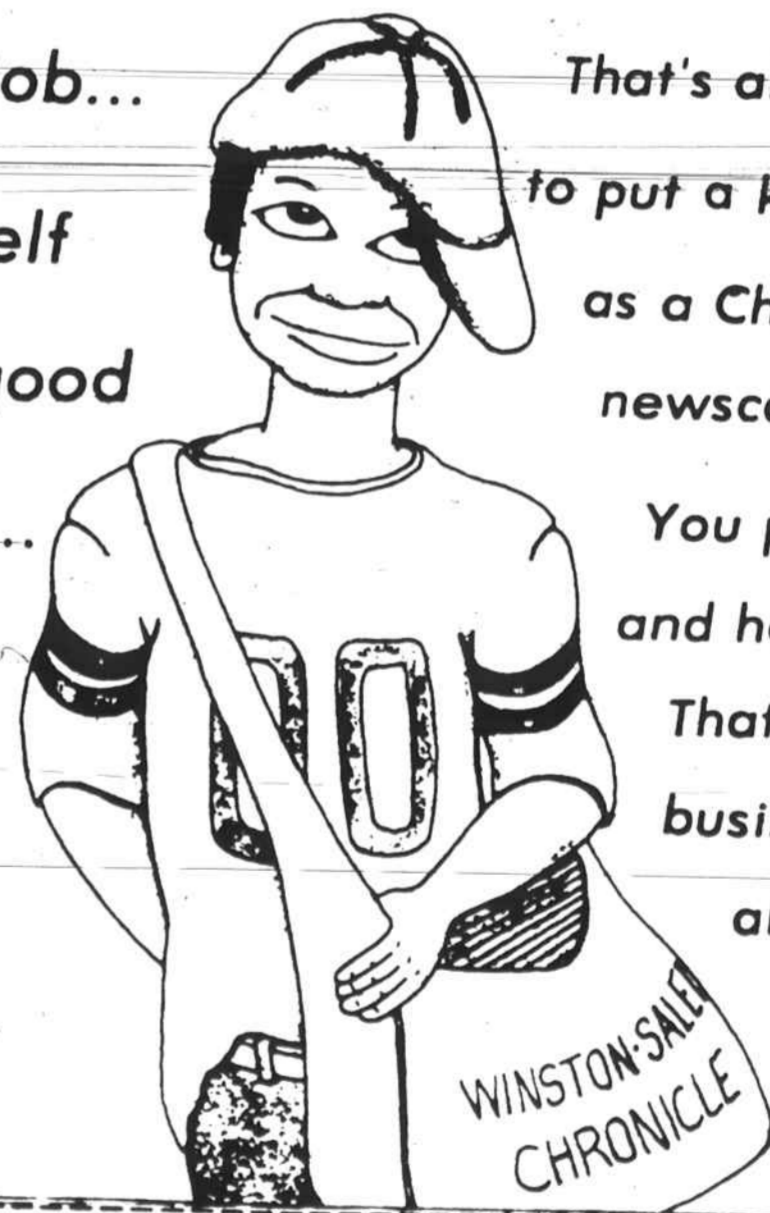
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