

Roundtable Holds Bond Opposition

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avoid a tax increase (if the bonds are passed)," says Patrick Hairston, a member of the Roundtable. "They haven't said how long the bonds will be financed. And even if housing is built in the inner-city to attract young black professionals, there would be no schools for their children to attend."

Another Roundtable member, Mel White, adds that the school board neglected the black community when its reorganization plan left no regular elementary schools in predominantly black communities. Kimberley Park, which is in a black neighborhood, is slated to become a K-5 "magnet" school to attract exceptional students interested in science, foreign language and computer science.

"Schools are a part of the fabric of any community," says White. "And when you talk about losing schools and then talk about PTA involvement, how can parents be expected to travel so far to attend these activities. What you're doing is breaking up a system."

White continues: "Another point we're hearing concerning the school issue relates to athletes. Our (black) kids from the inner-city have to find their own way to get to practices or to a game -- when buses are picking up children who are near the schools."

Hairston adds that even though black students excel in athletics, the city-county school system has only one black senior high school coach, Napoleon Cloud at West Forsyth, who coaches a major sport. Hairston also points out that the system employs no black senior high school principals. "And no bond referendum is going to change this in our lifetime," he says.

But proponents of the bond say that even though the school reorganization may not be perfect, four-year high schools, which the reorganization will bring about, is a must to ensure quality education. Dr. Manson Meads, co-chairman of the Citizens' Committee for Jobs and Education Referendum, terms the school bond as "probably the biggest contamination" of the bond package. And the other co-chairman, Louise Wilson, says quality education is more important than where students go to school.

Mayor Wayne Corpening says of the school issue: "Well, I think they (school board) are trying to keep the

racial balance as close as they can to have integrated schools."

The mayor agrees with Meads that the school bond is a worrisome point in the total bond package, but he says "we have to have education" and that he "will do everything to get them (bonds) passed."

But the Roundtable says it sees problems with the entire bond package and advises blacks to look at historical trends.

"Let's look at the overall trends in the black neighborhood in the last 20 years," says White. "We're losing our schools -- and the reorganization takes even more schools from us."

Hairston adds: "While they (bond proponents) are talking about jobs, look at how many blacks -- school cafeteria and janitorial workers -- will lose jobs. The jobs created will not balance out."

White further points out that the black population in the school system is growing, 38 percent in the overall system and 40 percent in K-5. "The black population in the system is growing and the system sees this -- and is doing everything it can to break it up," he says. "All we have to do is look at the annexation patterns and see how annexation is moving away from black areas -- which helps to dilute the building black voter population."

"I want access to all things the American society has to offer," he says. "I don't want to be white. But I do want to maintain my heritage and sense of identity with my people."

Tatum says it is evident that the white leaders and city and county officials fear that the black vote could defeat the bond package, yet those same leaders and officials won't be fair to blacks and the poor. "I question the white leaders always coming into the black community asking for its support, but not showing any support for the concerns of blacks," he says. "Why can't we (blacks) be a part of the whole society?"

Says White: "Respect and fairness -- this is all the poor, blacks or what have you are asking for ... and since we (blacks) don't have the economic clout to buy influence, the only way is at the voting booth."

Adds Hairston: "If it means fighting city hall, then fight we must."



Everybody was in high gear last weekend, even the trombone players, at the Winston-Salem State-Johnson C. Smith homecoming game (photo by James Parker).

NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet From Page A1

the white business community.

But Hairston says that he will not change his decision to oppose the bond package to please the white business community.

"If it means sacrificing my principles and what this organization (NAACP) stands for, we can very well do without it (financial support from the white business community). We thought that the white community believed what we were doing was honest and just," Hairston says. "And because we took a stand they don't believe in, they want to pull out."

Although Hairston would not specifically name which businesses are withholding support this year, he says that many he has talked with have questioned his opposition to the bond referendum and have been hesitant to pledge support.

But with or without the financial support from the white community, Hairston says the banquet will go on.

"I'm not worried. This is a black organization and blacks can support this thing if they want to," he says. "We (black people) can pull this thing off. This should be a sign to the black community to start supporting our own."

Grenada From Page A1

murderers. "No one condones what they (a junta believed to be headed by a Grenadian general, Hudson Austin) did to Bishop. Bishop was an international hero to black folk," he said. "But what we are saying is that the United States does not have the right to go over and take over."

In an effort to educate the community about the U.S.-led invasion of Grenada and the problems of black people in the apartheid government of South Africa, the leaders at the press conference will organize community forums on such issues.

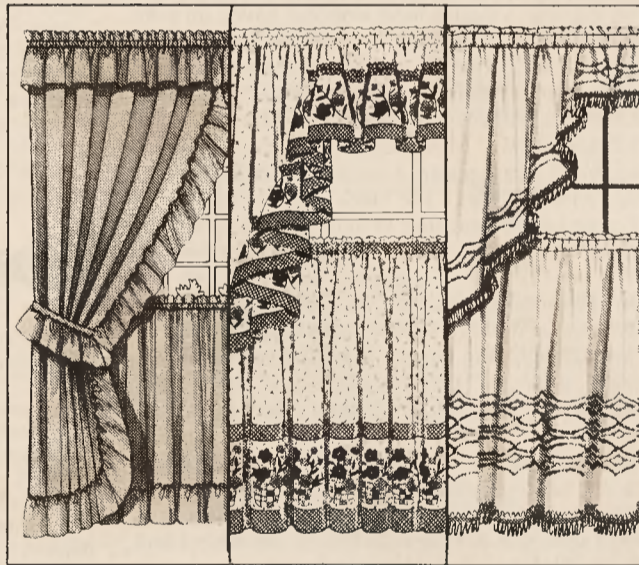
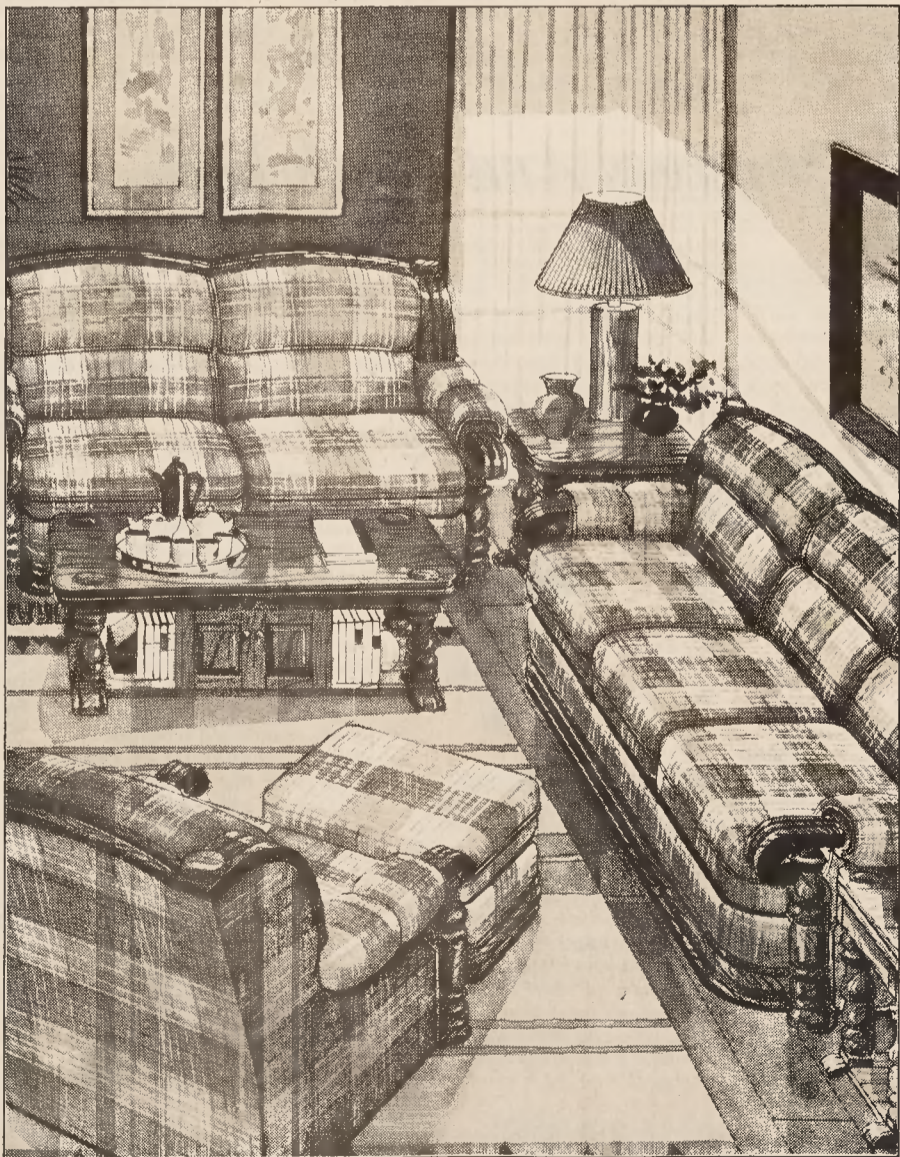
"When something like this happens," Eversley said, "black people feel a tremendous sense of helplessness and hopelessness. Black people everywhere are in the same boat. This country makes a distinction between black folk here and the ones in Africa or Grenada. But we are all the same."

Little said: "We have to educate our people on foreign policy. White folk think that black folk should not deal with foreign policy and international issues. We are supposed to be concerned with food stamps and dope."

"We need to get our people to see, that, yes, we are caught up in the day-to-day struggle for survival, ... but that we still have time to raise our conscience level on international policies. And the forum will let people see the broader picture of the things."

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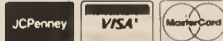
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