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ERNEST H. PITT, Publisher

NDUBISI EGEMONYE
Co-Founder

ALLEN JOHNSON
Executive Editor

ELAINE L. PITT
Office Manager

JOHN SLADE
Assistant Editor

Our Olympians

It is easy these days to want to discourage our young from holding athletes too highly in esteem.

Certainly enough athletes have dropped out of school to pursue what they thought would be lucrative, glory-filled careers in the pros, only to unceremoniously drop out of sight.

Others have made it to the Promised Land, excelling in what they do on the court or the field, but either retire too late for fear of having to live normal lives away from the limelight, or find the pressures of their personal or professional lives too great a burden to bear, and seek drugs as a convenient, albeit expensive and dangerous, refuge.

Then there is the fear we older folks have of our young becoming too preoccupied with being the next Dr. J or Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, and not spending enough time cultivating the most marvelous natural talent of all -- the ability to think.

So we relate the tales of such men as Kevin Ross, who played collegiate basketball at Creighton University while he could hardly read. And we shower them with the statistics dramatizing how remote their chances of playing professional sports are, how instant millionaires are few and far between, and how there are millions of little boys and girls dreaming the same dreams as theirs.

Still, the professional and amateur athlete is a wonder to behold, and despite the horror stories of drugs and shattered dreams, there are plenty among that special breed who earned their success through discipline, intense training and study, and who have achieved the delicate balance between being famous and wealthy and being human beings with the same joys and pains as the rest of us.

A special breed among that special breed are our nation's Olympians, many of whom devote most of their young lives to earning what may be one chance to compete against the best of the world.

And, although some might debate whether today's Olympians are amateurs in the truest sense, we think it would be safe to say that the overwhelming majority compete for the sheer joy of competition.

Of particular and enduring pride to Black America is the sterling record of its Olympians, from the great Jesse Owens to Rafer Johnson to Wilma Rudolph to Bill Russell to Cassius Clay to Edwin Moses.

We'll recount the record of Black Olympians in a special Black History Month series entitled "Black Olympians In History."

The series begins next issue and will continue throughout the month. We look forward to sharing it with you -- and your young dreamers.

Crosswinds

The Hutchins Case

From the Carolina Peacemaker.

Death comes to each of us, eventually.

Usually it comes unexpectedly.

Seldom does it come as a welcome visitor in the night or day.

"Thou shalt not kill" has been the Commandment which, as much as any of the Commandments, has contributed to the civilizing of human beings. Moreover, commitment to the Commandment has been a standard by which the human civilizing process has been measured by much of society.

So we have laws to prohibit killing and prohibit the violence which could lead to it. As a society, we have struggled to find ways to inhibit killers, to penalize them, to reform them, to isolate them, to avenge their deeds.

We don't know whether killing a human being as punishment or as a means of social control is ever justified. We have a feeling that some day society will resolve the question, probably on the side of "Thou shalt not kill," meaning "Thou shalt not kill," no ifs, ands or buts.

James Hutchins killed.

The State of North Carolina, in turn, sentenced him to be killed, and it plans to kill him.

It is likely that a wealthy James Hutchins could have avoided the sentence. We believe that many good and decent people honestly believe that the killing of Hutchins by the state is appropriate, just and humane.

Because of the way the legal process works, however, the Carolina Peacemaker believes that the killing of Hutchins is wrong. He was sentenced to death, not because he was himself a killer, but because he was unable to muster the defense against death which other killers have used to such advantage in thousands of other cases.

Moreover, to compel the killer to choose his preferred method of execution is doubly wrong, and we believe the Supreme Court will some day so hold.

Hutchins the killer is not yet dead. He is being scheduled, so to speak, to pay the price. However, society will continue to pay the price for both the killings by Hutchins and of Hutchins.

Please see page A5

LOOK AT EVERYTHING WE REPUBLICANS HAVE DONE FOR THE FAIR SEX--



WE BLOCKED THE ERA TO PROTECT THEM FROM THE DRAFT...



REDUCED CHILD CARE MONEY TO HALT EROSION OF THEIR FAMILIES...



AND CUT NUTRITION PROGRAMS TO PRESERVE THE PRIVILEGES OF MOTHERHOOD



AND WHAT DO THEY DO?



FLOCK TO THE DEMOCRATS

WOMEN! WHO CAN UNDERSTAND THEM?!



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An open letter to Chairman Parmon

By CLIFTON GRAVES
Chronicle Columnist

Dear Sister Earline,

First, let me say congratulations to you upon your recent election as chairperson of the Forsyth County Democratic Party.

This historic achievement makes you not only the first black -- and, of course, black woman -- to head the county organization, but makes you one of the few blacks nationwide who hold such an esteemed and strategic position.

Admittedly, I was initially extremely skeptical of your chances at attaining the chairmanship. My assessment was based primarily on the local party's historic neglect of and lack of sensitivity toward our black community. And while I all along believed that it was obviously in the Democrats best interest to select a committed and dedicated loyalist as yourself, I am still surprised that your colleagues removed the blinders from

their collective eyes and catapulted the local party into the 20th century.

Whether your election, Earline, was based on your loyalty and competence, or due to pressure put on the party regulars of just plain election-year political practicality, the reality is that you are now the "Chair," and both the white and black communities must deal with you.

Now, as was accurately reported by this paper prior to your election, I had, and still have, some serious concern as to how you will cope with the tremendous pressure which you will encounter as the 1984 national, state and local elections draw into sharper focus. To be sure, you will be put on the proverbial "hot seat" as you attempt to balance the

party's interests vis-a-vis the vested interests of the black community in the presidential, gubernatorial and local electoral sweepstakes.

While I personally do not envy you, I am certain that I echo the sentiments of the black community in wishing you Godspeed, the courage of Harriet Tubman, and the savvy of Mary McCleod Bethune as you face struggle after struggle.

Needless to say, the task will be difficult and the headaches numerous. Yet, if there is anyone up to the challenge, that person is you, Sister Earline.

Remember well the words of Frederick Douglass:

Power concedes nothing without a demand; it never did and it never will. If there is no struggle, there will be no progress.

In Peace, Love and Unity,
Clifton Graves

Clifton Graves is affirmative action officer at Winston-Salem State University.



Clifton Graves

Hunger report: What a scandal

By JOHN JACOB
Syndicated Columnist

The scandal of hunger in the land of plenty led to the appointment of a presidential commission to investigate hunger. Its report is itself a scandal -- papering over a serious national problem and recommending steps that can only make the problem worse.

The commission essentially dealt with three questions: Is there widespread hunger in the United States, why, and what should we do about it. It answered none of them satisfactorily.

On the question of whether there is hunger, the commission pussyfooted around the issue, getting bogged down in definitions. Sure, some people are hungry, it said, but not all that many and while we can't really place an accurate number on the hungry, there's no widespread national problem here.

That won't wash. There's plenty of evidence of hunger, and it can't just be dismissed as "anecdotal." For those "anecdotes" are factual case histories of real people who don't have enough to eat.

Acknowledging that there is some hunger, the commission goes on to doubt that malnutrition is a "major health problem" in the U.S., as if there's a level of malnutrition a decent society can tolerate. While there's no national epidemic of malnutrition, there is so much hunger

and even malnutrition in poverty areas and among the poor that failure to address the situation amounts to a retreat from decency.

Why is there hunger? The commission's report makes it seem as though the only reason lies in bureaucratic practices that allow some people to fall through the cracks between the various federal food programs.

That may be a small part of the reason, but by far the greater part lies in cuts that deprive pregnant women and their infants, school children, and many of the poor of participation in nutrition and food stamp pro-

grams. Faced with the clear need for expanding food assistance to help growing numbers of the poor and the hungry, the commission suggests a new block grant program. It wants to give states the option of taking federal food and nutrition funds in a lump sum and then running their own food programs.

Not only is this idea totally irrelevant to the problem the commission was supposed to be considering, it represents a formula for increasing hunger. It would make the system even less flexible and less effective.

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grams. The commission points out that the program cuts tried to preserve benefits for the "truly needy." But that meant that people whose incomes were just above the poverty line were dropped from aid programs.

In fact, such people are poor, and the poverty line is meaningless since it is based on an outdated formula that measures extreme deprivation, not poverty.

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Please see page A5

THIS PAMPHLET EXPLAINS THE CHANGES IN PHONE SERVICE DUE TO THE BREAKUP OF ATT



I SHOULD POINT OUT THAT YOU CAN EXPECT A SMALL ADDITIONAL CHARGE



CHARGE!!



Aiding 'wards of the street'

By MARIAN EDELMAN
Guest Columnist

"Some of them, they just never go home. They just live in these trucks, going from one state to another."

That's the way one truck driver described a growing but still largely invisible problem in this country -- runaway and homeless youth -- in the moving documentary "Wards of the Street," produced by Robbie Gordon for Post-Newsweek Stations Inc.

Last year, a U.S. Senate committee reported that there were 1.2 million runaways in the United States. Their average age is 15 -- not old enough to drink, to work, to drive a car.

Over one-third report having been physically abused or neglected by their parents before they left home. Others are children discarded by parents who no longer can handle them; children whose parents are dead, sick, in jail or unable to afford their care; children who simply have no families.

Many have been in so many programs, in so many homes and institutions, that they have chosen to reject help before it rejects them. Some children have been discharged from the foster care system or from juvenile detention programs with no plans and no place to go.

The lucky ones find their way to runaway and homeless youth shelters. Most seek shelter on the streets or in the arms of waiting pimps, prostitutes and drug dealers, who make their living from preying on vulnerable and unskilled children.

"They try very hard, these kids, to separate out in their heads what they really are from what they do to their bodies," said Father Bruce Ritter, founder and president of Covenant House, a Catholic runaway shelter for youth in New York City.

In 1974, Congress enacted the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act to help states develop more shelters like Covenant House for runaway children. Although the program has received slight increases in the last two years, it remains seriously underfunded. Federal money reaches less than 20 percent of all runaway youth in America today.

As a result of underfunding, the good programs that exist must constantly struggle to survive; many are understaffed and only able to provide short-term care. Most social service agencies do not have enough resources to help a family through a crisis and prevent a child from running away. Nor are there adequate resources for those children who need long-range care in a supervised, supportive environment but who are too old and too hurt to accept another family.

The problem may be invisible but it is costly: Runaways with no other source of support are not only likely to turn to prostitution but to crime. The damage they experience or do to others may make them permanent wards of our mental health or criminal justice systems.

Runaways who are forced to live on their own from day to day soon learn not to trust anyone and have the odds stacked against their growing up to become responsible, contributing members of society.

But perhaps the greatest argument for paying more attention to the needs of these children is pain: the pain of being a frightened child in a world made for adults. Asked what she would advise other children who are thinking of running away, she said:

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SIR - DON'T FORGET YOUR PAMPHLET



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